REMARKS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over various combinations of U.S. Patent No. 3,560,004 to Donley (hereinafter "Donley"), U.S. Patent No. 2,464,136 to Jenkins (hereinafter "Jenkins") and U.S. Patent No. 3,601,413 to Darnell (hereinafter "Darnell"). Claims 3, 6, 8-11 and 15-17 were cancelled herein. Claim 1 has been amended to better define the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention. Thus, for the following reasons, the rejection is now moot.

Regarding claim 1, neither Donley, nor Jenkins, nor Darnell teaches or suggests a "bellows having . . . a tapered collar extending inwardly from an end of the bellows," as required.

In Donley, the annular support members (33, 34) cited by the Examiner for teaching a collar do not include a *tapered* collar *extending inwardly*. Rather, inside surfaces of the support members (33, 34) that engage the sealing rings (35) are cylindrical, not tapered like the collar of claimed invention.

In Jenkins, the bellows (29) has outwardly flared lip (30, 33) in one embodiment (Fig. 2) and cylindrically shaped annular lips (42, 43) in another embodiment (Fig. 3).

Darnell does not disclose a bellows.

Thus, even if the references were combined, every element of the claim would not be taught or suggested. Therefore, claim 1 and its dependent claims 2, 4, 5, 7 and 12-14 are patentable over the prior art of record.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the
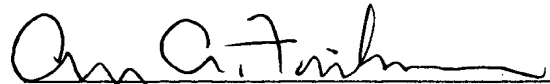
5

application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 32040US1.

Respectfully submitted,

PEARNE & GORDON LLP

By: _____
Aaron A. Fishman, Reg. No. 44682

526 Superior Avenue, East
Suite 1200
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1484
(216) 579-1700

Date: November 18, 2002

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 have been amended in the following manner:

1   1. (twice amended) A sealing system for a rotating machine having a stationary

2   element and a drive element rotationally connected to said stationary element, the sealing

3   system comprising:

4   a plate comprising a bearing surface, the plate [being connected] for connecting

5   to one of said drive element and said stationary element; and

6   a sealing assembly comprising a resilient bellows and a bearing surface, the

7   bellows having a plurality of corrugations and a tapered collar extending inwardly from

8   an end of the bellows, and the bellows providing a force which causes the bearing surface

9   of the sealing assembly to bear on the bearing surface of the plate to form a dynamic seal.

1   2. (amended) The sealing system of claim 1, wherein the sealing assembly further

2   comprises a thrust plate attached to the [resilient bellows] collar, and wherein the thrust

3   plate provides said bearing surface of the sealing assembly.

1   4. (amended) The sealing system of claim [3] 2, wherein the sealing assembly

2   further comprises a static sealing element, the static sealing element being disposed

3   within a gap provided between the collar and the thrust plate.

1   5. The sealing system of claim 1, further comprising a mounting element [which

2   connects] for connecting said plate to said one of said drive and stationary elements.

7